prospecting and exploiting Daphilimali bauxite deposits of Koraput/Kalahandi districts.

Empowering of State Governments to renew mining licence

3927. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to authorise the State Governments to renew mining licences of major minerals;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether it is a fact that there has been considerable hardship to the entrepreneurs in renewing the licences?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) State Governments are authorised under the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) act, 1957 to renew mining leases of all major minerals. However, for minerals listed in the First Schedule to the Act, the State Governments need to obtain prior approval of the Central Government.

(c) No, Sir.

Removal of Granite from minor minerals to major minerals

3928. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of
MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal under Government's consideration to remove granite from the minor minerals category and shift it to the major minerals and bring it under the control of the Central Government;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for such a proposal;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the State Ministers of Mines Conference have objected to this proposal; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) No decision to this effect has been taken.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, some States are not in favour of such a move.

Amendment in MMRD Act, 1957

3929. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Federation of Indian Mineral Industries and the Federation of Mining Association of Rajasthan have urged upon Government to expedite legislation pertaining to certain essential amendments in the MMRD Act, 1957 which have become long overdue;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to encourage foreign participation/ investments in exploration and exploitation of minerals both in captive and non-captive mines if so, how it is proposed to be done; and

(d) whether Government propose to bring forward the amending Bill before Parliament during the current session and if not, what is the present stage of progress in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) The Federation of Indian Mineral Industries and the Federation of Mining Association of Rajasthan have made suggestions for amendments to the Mines & Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 and have requested expeditious action. The amendments suggested are primarily intended to liberalise the existing

provisons relating to grant, renewal and termination of prospecting licences and mining leases under the MMRD Act imposition of Royalty on Minerals; and interstate movements etc.

(c) Government is fully aware of the need for encouraging in flow of uptodate technology and foreign investment in the field of exploration and exploitation of minerals.

(d) The proposed amendments are unlikely to come up for consideration during the current session of the Parliament.

Loss suffered by BALCO

3930. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to a report published in the "Business Standard" of Calcutta of 4th December, 1992 under the heading "Audit Hammers BALCO Accounts";

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard;

(c) whether it is a fact that the auditors of Public Sector Bharat Aluminium Company Limited have detected over a hundred discripancies in the company's annual accounts for the fiscal year 1992, if so, what are the details in this regard;

(d) the extend of loss suffered by Bharat Aluminium Company Limited during the fiscal years 1990, 1991 and 1992;

(e) whether it is also a fact that the auditors of Bharat Aluminium Company Limited were removed from the panel of Statutory public sector auditors by CAG on previous two occassions if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) to (d) The accounts of the Company for the year 1991-92 have yet to be finalized by the C & AG and approved at the Annual General Meeting. BALCO's accounts for the years 1989-90 and 1990-91 show a profit of Rs. 1.10 crores and Rs. 0.19 crores, respectively.

(e) The two joint Statutory Auditors appointed for the audit of BALCO for the year 1988-89 were not considered for re-appointment for audit of Accounts of the Company for the year 1989-90 and no other audits were given to them for a period of two years. One of the two Auditors appointed for audit of BALCO for the year 1989-90 was not re-appointed for audit of BALCO accounts for 1990-91 but the firm was given some other assignment.

3931. *[Transferred to 21st December, 1992]*

Safety Equipment Purchased by Hindustan Copper Limited

3932. PROF. SAURIN BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of purchases of safety equipments made by the Hindustan Copper Limited during the last two years for its workers and staff in their various installations;

(b) whether it is a fact that safety shoes are still not being supplied to the workers and staff; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) The important purchases of safety items made by Hindustan Copper Limited during the last two years for its workers and staff are different types of boots, cap lamp, belts, helmets, hand gloves, dust respirators, etc.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.